

Volume 18, Issue 2  
Fall/Winter 2009

A NEWSLETTER FOR  
THE HUB CITY



# Bulletin

## Comments from the Community Meeting

The Fall Community meeting provided a great opportunity to listen to residents of Burlington talk about why Burlington is the place to live, work and relax. While there has been a lot of growth in the retail and industrial areas, and many new homes have been built, Burlington still has its small town character.

Although the history of Burlington is a story yet to be told in a museum and in memorials, public art, and public places, people really like old Downtown and the older neighborhoods as a place to be and a reflection of the story of the community. The history of Burlington and Agriculture in the Skagit Valley is a great heritage of mixed cultures and shared values. The message is clear: keep the city small with big city amenities, improve on the existing livable and walkable community, move forward with public art, and manage growth with care.

Ideas were shared about great public art, how to present the community history, and the importance of volunteers in the community to make good things happen. The future of the Grafton House site on Burlington Boulevard was also discussed as a great pocket park site if the house is removed.

Issues are facing the community. People have major concerns about flood insurance rates and the effects of

changes to the Flood Insurance Rate Maps, while the city and the Dike District are moving ahead to best protect the community from flooding. The financial future of the School District that has served families for generations is on the minds of the citizens. On other topics, there are recommendations for restriping the lanes at the new roundabout for ease of use by people hauling trailers (without hitting the curb on the inside lane). Some people like the old farm equipment in the roundabout, others would prefer to present the history of farming in Skagit County through farm shows and event celebrating farming. Still other ideas include showing off sites around the community that fit together including historic places, events and people with interpretative signs and displays.

***Burlington is a great place to live, work and relax!***



## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

I have presented to the Burlington City Council a budget proposal that will definitely be the most formidable in the history of our city. As you the citizens of Burlington know, these are challenging and uncertain financial times, and the commitment and sacrifices made for the 2010 budget will most certainly be felt by one and all.

With the uncertainty of our economy and the fragile state of our financial status, there will be a lot of unknowns that we must deal with not only next year, but in the future. Therefore, I believe the proposed budget to the Council will be positive to both the City of Burlington and city staff and will make us all stronger for our efforts.

Again, my door is always open.

*Mayor Ed Brunz*



**READ COMPLETE  
NEWSLETTER ONLINE @  
[www.ci.burlington.wa.us](http://www.ci.burlington.wa.us)**

**Due to budget challenges and an effort to save on printing and mailing costs, you are receiving the shortened version of the city newsletter. Please go to our website to view the full version. Thank you for your support.**

## Grass & Brush Service to Change in 2010

The Yard Waste Recycling Center in Burlington will be making changes to meet current operating costs. At this point in our budget process, the City will begin to charge for brush disposal and limit hours of operation in 2010 to Saturdays only.

Our plan is to take only brush items such as: small tree limbs, blackberry and ivy

vines, small dead bushes from flowers and garden waste, and similar brush items, **BUT NO GRASS CLIPPINGS.**

Waste Management provides a weekly curbside service for grass clippings and other compost materials. This service pickup includes a 96-gallon roll cart at \$8.05 per month. For additional information please call 360-757-4068.

City residents have appreciated the free yard waste recycling service for years and we regret having to make this change.

Residents will be able to purchase a punch card to use the brush disposal service. Please watch your utility bill information sheet for more information.



### ***CHRISTMAS TREE DISPOSAL*** ***December 28 – January 17***



Residents living within the city limits of Burlington may haul their Christmas tree to the *“Free Self-Serve Christmas Tree Disposal”* from *December 28, 2009 to January 17, 2010* at the Yard Waste Center located at 951 S. Section Street.

## **POLICE NEWS – Community Resource Officer**

**In** July the Burlington Police Department’s goal of obtaining a Community Resource Officer position was realized. The position’s essential functions include development and implementation of a variety of crime prevention, safety, and community relations programs for our communities. In addition the identification, risk assessment and tracking of gang presence in our community are major duties of this position.

The Burlington Police Department recognizes that facilitating partnerships between law enforcement and our communities is essential to meeting our vision of “Community Commitment through Professional Service.”

Over the last few months I have had the opportunity as Community Resource Officer to develop crime prevention, safety and community relations programs and have presented a number of these to community civic, neighborhood, faith based and educational organizations. We are also looking forward to enhancing and expanding our neighborhood block watch programs in the months ahead.

If you are interested in a program being brought to your neighborhood, business or organization please telephone or email.

**Officer Tim Vandyken**  
**Community Resource Officer**  
**Phone: 360-755-0921**  
**Weekdays 8:30am to 4:30pm**  
**Email: [timv@ci.burlington.wa.us](mailto:timv@ci.burlington.wa.us)**

# Municipal Court

The Municipal Court is still processing passports; the city receives \$25 fee



for each passport application. This works out to an average of \$1,000 a month, less mailing costs. The Department of State recently changed their mailing policy, and we now have to send passport applications certified mail, which is an additional cost.

Gross revenue for the first three quarters of 2009 is \$212,853.72 with \$122,872.93 staying local. This is approximately 15% lower than this time last year. We have had 1,936 tickets filed in the first three quarters, which is 3% higher than the same time last year.

So far this year, the City Work Program (CWP) has logged in 698 days of work in lieu of jail. If these days had been spent in the Skagit County Jail, the city would have paid \$47,464. This also is a great resource for the City, and has cut down on paid summer part-time help, and is getting projects accomplished that the city staff do not have the time to complete.

As always I invite all you to call or stop by if you have any questions.

## Fire Department News



The Fire Department has recently taken delivery of a new fire engine. Our personnel are busy making the necessary in-house modifications and are positioning tools and equipment on the truck. We hope to have the new vehicle in service soon.

As anyone who followed the recent contract negotiations between the City and Fire District Six knows, District Six elected to relocate their rescue truck, which had historically been housed in the Burlington Fire Station, to the District fire station. This left the City without the immediate services of a rescue truck. A vehicle of that type carries special tools and equipment (such as the "Jaws" extrication tool) that are used at motor vehicle accidents and the myriad of other rescue situations that can confront firefighters.

In order to have special rescue tools and equipment available to us without delay we are presently equipping the new fire engine as a combination

firefighting and rescue vehicle.

A new, state-of-the-art "Jaws" type extrication tool has been purchased along with all the equipment necessary to make this fire engine a versatile "all-hazards" addition to the Burlington Fire Department.

Where did the money for all this come from? The greater part of the funding was acquired through the collection of impact fees from the developers of commercial property within Burlington. The new fire engine will serve our community for at least 25 years.

The Burlington Fire Department could not continue to serve and improve without the continued support of our citizens, our citizen-soldiers (volunteer firefighters), our career staff and our elected officials. Thank you.

## Business Licenses



As Burlington continues to grow, businesses come and go, especially during the Holiday Season.

Please remember, **all businesses must register with the State of Washington Department of Revenue and the City of Burlington in order to engage in business inside the city limits**, per Burlington Municipal Code 5.04.090.

The 2010 City of Burlington business license renewals will be mailed in December and are due before January 31, 2010. Please be sure to include your application form, noting any address, phone number or contact information changes along with your 2010 renewal payment. A penalty of 10% per month will be assessed against any delinquent business license fees after January 31, 2010. Please contact the Finance Department at 360-755-0531 or stop by 833 S. Spruce Street if you have any questions or concerns regarding your business license.

## Winterfest @ Your Library

The Burlington Library has three fun-packed Saturday events in December for people of all ages. Please come join in these no-charge events and celebrate the season together!

### December 5: Portrait Day, 10 a.m.—5 p.m.

The first 75 parties to make a reservation sit for portraits and receive a CD of their digital photographs. Call 360-755-0760.

### December 12: Swap Meet

Drop off your gently-used books, CDs, DVDs, toys and games between 9:00 and 11:00 a.m., and get one ticket per item. **Come back from 1:00-3:00 p.m. and go “shopping:”** all items “cost” one ticket! Only ticket holders may participate.

### December 19: All-age Gaming Extravaganza, 1:00—4:00 p.m.

Bring your favorite board games and meet new friends who also like to play. We'll have a Wii, a gaming station, and chess and checker tables set up. Refreshments and door prizes at 1:30! (We also hope to have a gaming consultant present for parents seeking gift advice.)

Also, stay tuned for dates and times for our upcoming “Music in the Stacks” programs!

## PARKING QUESTIONS

I often get calls from residents about “other people” parking in front of **their** house. Even though you live in the city limits and have street parking, the space in front of your residence **is not assigned to your residence**. Anyone can park a licensed, operating vehicle in the city right-of-way for a period not to exceed 72 hours (excluding Sundays and holidays) unless otherwise posted.



However, if a vehicle is blocking your driveway and prohibiting you from entering or leaving your property please call the dispatch center at 428-3211 and we will respond. If you have any other parking questions, please contact Robin Blair, Code Enforcement Officer at the Burlington Police Department 755-0921, ext. 307.

## Campers, Cars and Boats...oh my!

It looks like our perfect summer has come to an end. Fall has arrived and it's time to pack away all the camping gear including RV's and camp trailers.

Recreational vehicles, equipment trailers, boats, and all other trailers **can not be parked/stored in the city right of ways** per BMC10.12.170, with the exception of packing for a planned trip. A recreational vehicle may be parked in front of your residence for the purpose of loading or unloading for a trip, but can not be there for more than two days. If the vehicles mentioned above are parked in the city right of way, they will be tagged for impound.

It is also illegal to occupy a recreational vehicle for any residence purpose any where on public or private property in

the city except in a duly established trailer park which in maintained in accordance with all applicable state statutes and city ordinances. A temporary use permit for a period of 30 days may be granted through the planning department to accommodate visiting family, construction, etc. You can contact the Planning Department at 755-9717 for more information.

It's also a good time to remove all inoperable vehicles from the city right of way. All vehicles must be in good running order, have current tabs, and move every 72 hours in order to be parked in the right of way. If they don't, they will be tagged for impound.

Lastly, if you have a junk vehicle that you are trying to get rid of, but don't have the title to, you can contact the Code Enforcement Officer and she will do a junk vehicle inspection and provide you with the proper paperwork to dispose of the vehicle. These types of inspections are done for DISPOSAL ONLY; the paperwork will not give you proper title for resale. If you have any questions you can contact Robin Blair at the Burlington Police Department at 755-0921 ext #307 or through Cascade Dispatch at 428-3211.



# UPDATE: FEMA Flood Mapping, Skagit River Hydrology and Levee Certification

Much activity continues on the flood issue. In the Spring 2009 newsletter, we described how the partnership of Burlington, Mount Vernon, Dike District 12 and Dike District 17 directed additional technical analyses of the historic flood events, estimated reduced discharges for those events, and published the results in a study entitled "Skagit River Basin Hydrology Report, Existing Conditions, October 2008." This report is posted on the City's web page.

Our work over the last several years on the hydrology issue has resulted in a huge body of documentation, new research, and analysis which we believe is the most substantiated, compelling and authoritative of any ever conducted on the Skagit. And in addition to our study, Skagit County, through its consultant, also provided new research into the hydrology. The "bottom line" of these studies is summarized in the table below:

**100-Year Regulated Skagit River Peak Flow Estimates  
(includes affect of currently-authorized dam storage), cubic feet per second**

Consultant	Location	Location	Location
	Dalles Bridge - Concrete	SR-9 Bridge - Sedro-Woolley	Riverside Bridge - Mount Vernon
Corps of Engineers	209,490	215,270	192,900
Northwest Hydraulics	191,400	196,690	176,250
Pacific International Engineering	184,490	184,700	162,200

Copies of both the Northwest Hydraulics and the Pacific International Engineering reports have been provided to FEMA. We do not know whether FEMA is incorporating the information in these reports into its hydrologic basis for the new flood maps. Our latest information is that FEMA may release the preliminary flood maps in mid-December.

In July, the City and Skagit County met with the Seattle District, Corps of Engineers to discuss the two new hydrology reports with the goal of reaching agreement on the hydrology. Unfortunately, the Corps was not prepared for a serious technical discussion, and did not change its position. The Corps recommended the issue be taken to the US Geologic Survey office, since the USGS is responsible for the estimates of the historic peak flow estimates. This meeting was held in August. The outcome of that meeting was that the USGS refused to consider the new studies.

*continued on Page 8*

## PARKS DEPARTMENT

The Parks Department has completed several capital projects this year. It is necessary to explain why these projects are being completed during these trying times.

Capital funds come primarily from Impact Fees and Real Estate Excise Tax. Both of these funds have an expiration date and must be used before the opportunity passes. The capital fund has been growing at a high interest rate over the past several years. As the funds have grown, the interest rates have eventually collapsed and the expiration date is nearing the end. With building costs down, interest rates down and the expiration coming to a close, this is the most opportune time to use the capital funds as they are meant to be used. The capital fund is meant to keep up with the public demand and population growth by way of capital projects and capital equipment. Having said this, our operating budget is suffering. It has become a priority to spend capital funds on projects that will lessen operating costs. Here are some of the capital projects in 2009.

### COMPLETED

- Rotary Park Parking Lot
- Highway 20 Trail
- Maiben Park Entrance
- Purchased Picnic Tables
- Purchased Mower
- Skagit River Park Curb

### TO BE COMPLETED BY YEARS END

- Flagpole Lighting at Skagit River Park
- Covered Shelter Lighting at Maiben Park
- Community Hall Tile/Carpet
- Border around Restroom at Skagit River Park

### UNDER CONSTRUCTION

- Whitmarsh Restrooms



## Fire in the Hole!

Thank you for coming out and enjoying the Burlington Harvest Festival and Pumpkin Pitch that was held on September 26!

Estimates are in that around 4,000-6,000 people attended the festivities. It was a great day that was **FREE**, for **FAMILIES**, and **FUN!**

Next year's date:  
**September 25, 2010**

The Chamber and Burlington Parks and Recreation are already working on 2010 to make this bigger and better. Please contact their offices if you have some ideas to share—we'd love to hear you're input.

**Burlington Chamber**  
**757-0994**

**Burlington Parks & Recreation**  
**755-9649**

### THANK YOU to our SPONSORS & VOLUNTEERS:

- City of Burlington
- Burlington Chamber of Commerce
  - B-EHS Student Volunteers
  - B-EHS ROTC
  - Frazier Farms
  - Wagons West
- Stowe's Shoes & Clothing
  - Norm Nelson's
- Garrison Engineering
  - Skagit Surveyors
  - Barnett Implement
- Burlington Parks Foundation
- Kid's Fun Zone Sponsors
  - Ria Vanderpool
- Safety Team Members
  - & many more!





*See you next year!*

From our perspective, this puts us into an endless loop. The Corps position is that it will not use the reports to modify its estimates of the historic flood events, although it has independent authority to do so. Instead, the Corps points to the USGS and says it will modify its report if the USGS modifies its estimates of the historic flood events. The USGS position is that it will not use any externally-generated information to revise its own estimates of the historic floods, even if the methodology is superior to the methodology it uses. Therefore, it will not consider any of the information produced by Burlington and Skagit County. From the USGS's point of view, it does not care whether the Corps uses its estimates of the historic floods or not, and it points out that the Corps has independent authority to use the USGS data or not use it – which brings the issue back to the starting point. FEMA, which contracted with the Corps to provide analysis for its hydrological basis of the revised flood maps, has not yet shown its cards on whether it will consider the additional information provided by Burlington and Skagit County, or not. As previously stated, we understand that FEMA may be releasing the revised preliminary flood maps in mid-December. We'll know then.

The reason the hydrology issue is so important is because overstated hydrology will cause every flood measure to be more expensive, and in Burlington's case, cause Dike District 12 to build the levees higher to achieve certification, which negatively impacts surrounding communities while increasing residual risk (higher levees = more damage if there is a catastrophic levee failure). We believe, as a practical matter, the incorrect Corps of Engineers hydrologic analysis will make a regional flood project impossible to achieve. Nevertheless, at this point, we have no choice but to proceed using the Corps' overstated hydrology, even

while this overstated hydrology puts a regional flood project in serious doubt.

Here are two examples of how the overstated hydrology will make achieving a regional flood project more difficult, while precluding common-sense flood measures that otherwise would reduce flood risk:

1) In the case of additional upstream flood storage from the hydroelectric projects, the Corps hydrology will show that theoretically, additional flood storage is not warranted because it would be overwhelmed during a 100-year event. Our study shows otherwise: we believe additional upstream storage could make the critical difference. As of the date of this newsletter, the most recent information we have from the Corps of Engineers is that additional dam storage is unlikely to ever be authorized due to this conundrum.

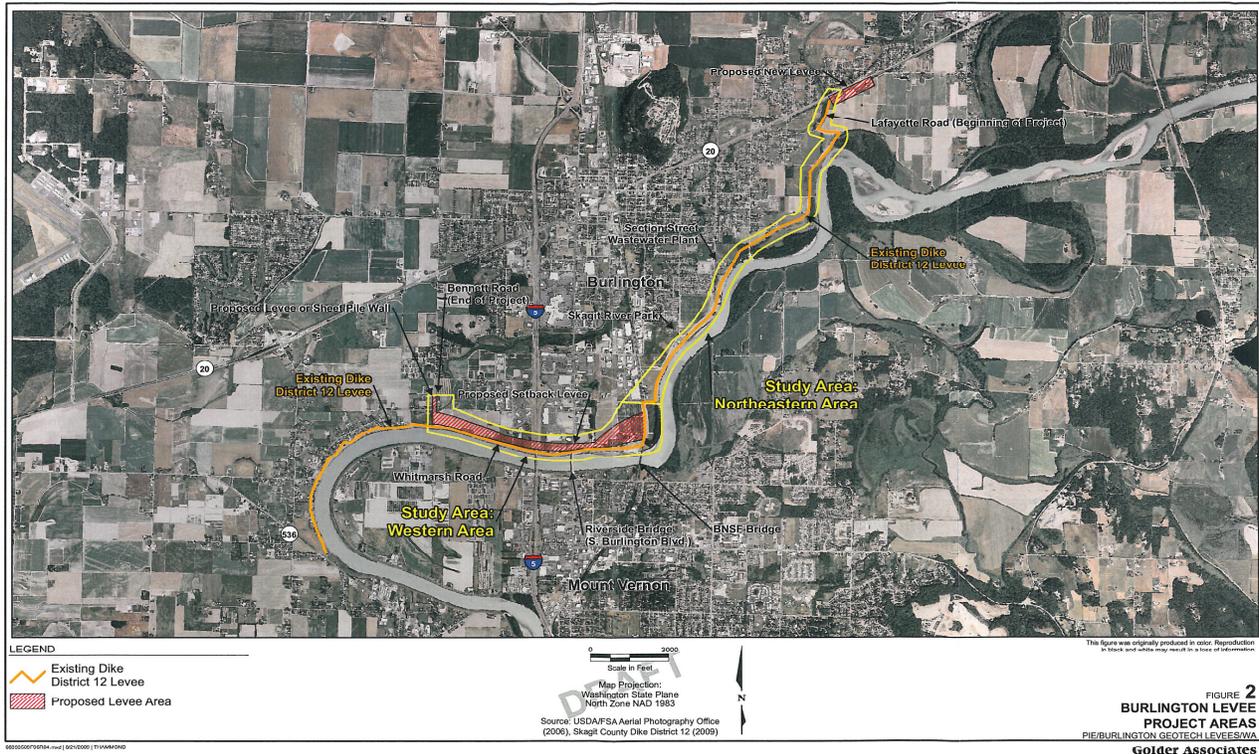
2) In the case of replacing the BNSF bridge, the Corps hydrology will require a massive project for complete bridge replacement, as well as reconstruction of the rail approaches on either side. Our study holds the possibility of modifying the bridge in addition to active debris management during floods.

Can Dike 12 and Burlington still achieve certification of the upstream portion of the levee, even considering the Corps hydrology? Yes. Given the information provided by our recent geotechnical studies further discussed below, we believe we will make significant progress toward levee certification within the next decade, and may be able to complete the certification work within the next two decades.

It is important to remember that even if the Partnership is successful in getting the underlying Skagit River hydrology corrected, Burlington's base flood elevations are still going to go up significantly. That is because FEMA

does not recognize Dike District 12's levee system; therefore, FEMA's flood model assumes the levees do not exist. Further, FEMA then models the flood water flow for the "worst case" situation – that is, no levees on the Burlington side of the river, while the levees hold on the Mount Vernon side. One can visualize that under this artificial situation, Skagit flood water would of course flow directly through the City, whether the hydrology is corrected or not. Even with corrected hydrology, the estimated "100-year" Skagit flood event is larger than any flood that has occurred in the past 150 years. Therefore, until the City, in partnership with Dike District 12, can get appropriate sections of the levee system "certified" so that the levees will be recognized by FEMA in the flood modeling process, the new base flood elevations will be much higher than today's.

We have made progress in the certification process. Burlington's/Dike 12's consultant recently produced a comprehensive draft geotechnical report of the existing condition of Dike 12's levee system, and an estimate of what it will take to improve the system to withstand a 100-year flood event. This report will be finalized by mid-November. We are already using the preliminary results to plan our next steps toward ultimately getting the levee system certified, from its upstream terminus near Highway 20 and Lafayette Road, downstream below the I-5 bridge. The Dike District will be steadily working on the levee system to meet the new levee top elevations that will be necessary to achieve certification for the worst-case condition – that is, Corps of Engineers 100-year hydrology. Initially, work will focus on the levee upstream of the railroad bridge. Later, after property has been acquired for the setback levee, a new levee will be constructed several hundred feet back of the existing levee through the bridge corridor.



### Dike District 12 Certified Levee Project Area

Finally, Burlington has been working with Sedro-Woolley and our state delegation toward eventual replacement of all or part of the BNSF bridge, constructed in 1917. Our flood modeling, as well as our community experience, clearly indicates this bridge is a hazard to the adjacent levee systems and further, will likely fail in a 100-year flood event. Our hydraulic modeling shows water surface elevations will be above the bottom chord of the bridge girders in a major flood. And since this will certainly cause debris buildup

upstream of the bridge, we know this is a recipe for bridge failure. So far, we have not received any official action from state or federal agencies with regard to this problem, because the bridge is the private property of BNSF. But there is an obvious public interest here, and we will continue to make the argument that planning needs to get underway to replace or modify the bridge.



*1995 Skagit River Flood – BNSF Bridge failure*



*1995 Skagit River Flood – After the flood*

There is much more going on with this issue than we have room to print here. Please feel free to contact Public Works Director Chal Martin at [cmartin@ci.burlington.wa.us](mailto:cmartin@ci.burlington.wa.us) any time you need the most recent information. Additionally, watch the City's web page.

## FALL & WINTER recreation PROGRAMS

### UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS



Burlington Parks and Recreation  
Creating Community Through People, Parks, and Programs



### Holiday Arts 'N Crafts Show

DATE: Saturday, November 21  
 TIME: 9:00 am—3:00 pm  
 LOCATION: Burlington Community Center  
 1011 Greenleaf Avenue

Over 26 vendors selling handcrafted items including: candles, soaps, rag rugs, turned wood bowls, BBQ sauces and vinegars.

FREE coffee and every shopper will receive a raffle ticket. Support our **Holiday Food Drive for the Alger Food Bank** and receive a raffle ticket for every non-perishable item you bring!

### Skagit Scrapbooking SUPER Swap Meet

DATE: Saturday, April 10  
 TIME: 9:00 am—Noon  
 @: Burlington Comm. Ctr.  
 1011 Greenleaf Avenue



An official event of the Tulip Festival! FREE admission into the Swap Meet—things will be priced to sell. Got some extra unused Scrapbooking supplies lying around? Rent a table and sell them—now's your chance! Contact us to rent a 6 foot or 12 foot table. Don't wait call 755-9649—table spaces are going quickly!

### UPCOMING YOUTH CLASSES

Please pre-register, the minimum needs to be met one week prior to the start date.

#### Kids Self Reliance Classes w/ Camp Fire Instructors

**"I Can Do It"** Grades 2, 3, 4  
 Sat., January 9 \$25 11 am—5 pm

**Babysitting Basics** Grades 5, 6, 7, 8  
 Mon., January 25 \$45 8:30 am—5 pm  
 (No School for B-EDS 7-12 Grade on 1/25/10)



#### Cartooning Classes \$35/month

Mondays Ages 13 & up 4 pm—7 pm  
 November 23  
 December 7, 14, 21, 28  
 January 4, 11, 18, 25

### Manners & Etiquette Classes



**"Pass the Peas Please"** Ages 13 to 18  
 Sat, November 21 \$30 9:00 am—Noon

**"Pass the Peas Please"** Ages 7 to 12  
 Sat, December 19 \$30 9:00 am—Noon

Minimum of 5 needed one week prior

**January and February dates coming soon!** Saturdays and weeknight options; call us for more details @ 755-9649.

*more classes listed on page 11*

*It's the Holiday Season; don't buy more "stuff"...give the gift of "experience"!*

### GIFT OF EXPERIENCE CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

call 755-9649 for details

# UPCOMING **YOUTH** CAMPS & DAY PROGRAMS

## WINTER BREAK PROGRAMS & NO SCHOOL DAYS



### North Pole Workshop Youth Ages 6-12

It is so fun to make your own presents and learn to make some yummy goodies too! We'll keep you super busy making homemade presents for your friends and family. Then you'll wrap them up to place under the tree. Register quickly—space is limited. Pack yourself a snack and dress for a mess!

**Mon/Tues., Dec. 21 & 22** \$45 9 am — Noon

Register by December 16 — Min 6/Max 12

## CAMP HOLIDAZE Ages 6—13

Winter Break should be a time to go out and have some FUN! We've got fun, engaging, and activity filled day trips planned! Pack a lunch/water.

**December 23, 28, 29 & 30** \$90

All Four **CAMP HOLIDAZE** Days

9 am—4 pm Min 6/Max 10

Register by Wed., December 16

**Wed., December 23** \$25

### PIZZA & BOWLING

Pizza Factory tour and Riverside Bowling—bring some quarters!

9 am—4 pm Min 6/Max 10

Register by Wed., December 16



**Mon., December 28** \$25

### ICE SKATING & HOT COCOA

Everett Community Ice Rink & Hot Cocoa—dress warm!

9 am—4 pm Min 6/Max 10

Register by Mon., December 21

**Tues., December 29** \$25

### CHIPMUNKS & SNACKS

Make your own movie snacks and then we're off to watch *Alvin & the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel*

9 am—4 pm Min 6/Max 10

Register by Tues., December 22



**Wed., December 30** \$25

### GYMNASTICS & GOOP

Spend the day making different kinds of Goopy messy fun and then off to Mt. Baker Gymnastics for 2 hours!

9 am—4 pm Min 6/Max 10

Register by Wed., December 23

## HATHA YOGA

**Thursday Evenings** 5:30 pm—6:45 pm

\$24 per month—if pd by 1st or 2nd Thursday Ages 13 & Up  
\$10 Drop-ins welcome Instructor: Sherry Thostenson

## SIMPLY SCRAPBOOKING—pre-registration encouraged

**Friday Night Crops** \$5 5 pm—11 pm

February 26 Min 6/Max 18

March 20 Min 6/Max 18

**Saturday 12 Hour Crops** \$29 8 am—8 pm

December 19 Min 10/Max 18

February 27 Min 10/Max 18

March 20 Min 10/Max 18

**24 Hour Crop!** \$50 5 pm—5 pm

Friday/Saturday—January 22/23 Min 10/Max 18

Unlimited coffee/water for 24 hours, Friday dinner and Saturday continental breakfast!

## TEENS — No School Days

**Mon., December 21** \$19

### SEATTLE WINTERFEST

Seattle is incredible dressed up in white lights for the holidays. Do some holiday shopping, go Ice Skating at Seattle Center's Ice Rink, grab dinner, and shop 'til you drop at Westlake Center and downtown. Great girls day and night out!

2 pm—9 pm Ages 13-17

Register by Wed., December 16—Min 6/Max 11

**Tues., December 22** \$39

### GAMEWORKS

Test your game skills on over 175 games at Gameworks! 1.5 hour game card, pizza, soda, cookies, transportation and super-visibility included in fee.

2 pm—8 pm Ages 13-17

Register by Wed., December 16—Min 6/Max 11

**Tues., December 29** \$39

### TRAXX RACEWAY

The countdown starts for your heat, your pulse quickens as you grip the steering wheel. Pedal to the metal, you're doing 30 miles per hour in seconds while sitting only two inches from the raceway. Two races guaranteed! Eat lunch there, bring some quarters and go game crazy.

11 am—3:30 pm Ages 14-17

Register by Wed., December 16—Min 6/Max 11

**Mon., January 25 (no school for B-ESD)** \$19

### SWIM & PIZZA BASH

The Arne Hanna Aquatic Facility in Bellingham is our destination! With 4 separate swimming pools, a spring board, and 2 hours of swimming...time will just fly by! Pizza lunch is on us before we swim at Pizza Factory before we swim!

11 am—3:30 pm Grades 7-10

Register by Wed., December 16—Min 6/Max 10

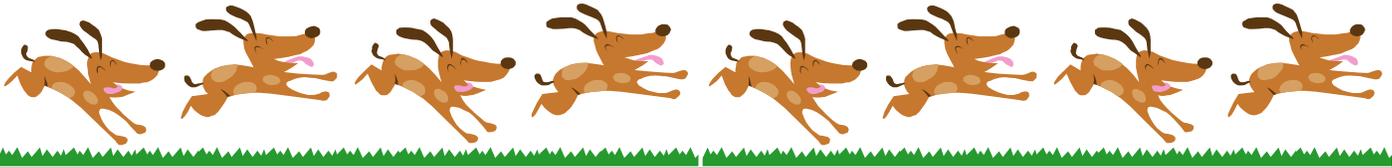
## BE A RESPONSIBLE DOG OWNER

Remember to purchase a new dog license for your dog. Dogs running at large are at risk of being impounded. A tag connects you and your pet in our data base. A dog tag can be purchased at the Burlington Police Department Monday thru Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Please be advised that the fee schedule has changed with the implementation of the new animal code. It is as follows:

- Dog at large 1<sup>st</sup> offense \$103
- Dog at large 2<sup>nd</sup> offense \$154
- Dog at large 3<sup>rd</sup> offense \$205
- Dog at large 4<sup>th</sup> offense \$308
- Nuisance Noise (Barking) = \$100
- Dogs declared **potentially dangerous** = \$250 registration fee **AND** \$25,000 insurance bond.
- Dogs **declared dangerous** = \$500 registration fee **AND** \$250,000 insurance bond.



**Every home needs to be prepared and STAY PREPARED!** Review your Flood procedure at home with your household and take the time to put your Emergency Preparedness Kit together, or check your flashlight batteries in your existing kit.

For more information be sure to read the enclosed **Flood & Natural Hazard Reduction bulletin** included in this newsletter.



833 S. Spruce Street  
Burlington WA 98233

Phone: 360-755-0531  
Fax: 360-755-9565

E-mail: [cityhall@ci.burlington.wa.us](mailto:cityhall@ci.burlington.wa.us)

*Serving you with pride!*



Check out our website:  
[www.ci.burlington.wa.us](http://www.ci.burlington.wa.us)





## FLOOD & NATURAL HAZARD REDUCTION PUBLIC INFORMATION BULLETIN #34



**Fall 2009**

***This Bulletin is being sent to you because your property has been determined to be in the floodplain.***

Burlington is in partnership with Dike District #12 and together, great progress is being made on local flood hazard mitigation planning. Over the summer, extensive geotechnical work was completed on the levee segment that begins on the east side and extends from Lafayette Road south to the Railroad Bridge. This is a critical step in identifying any potential problems with the levee strengthening and enlargement work that has been in process for several years. Additional detailed topographic studies have added to the accuracy of the computer modeling work. At the same time, federal environmental review of the proposal to set the levees back, from the Railroad Bridge through the three bridge corridor past Interstate 5, on both sides of the Skagit River, is moving forward as a joint effort of Skagit County, Burlington, Mount Vernon and Dike Districts #12 and 17. These two program components, levee enlargement and setback levees, are the major efforts in process to directly protect Burlington from the 100-year base flood event.

Local efforts aimed at getting the key experts at the national level to agree with city and county consultants on the major issue of hydrology (how much water gets here in a 100 year flood event) have not yet been successful. A Final Environmental Impact Statement will be issued by Burlington and Dike District #12 when adequate information is available to clearly present the city's best options and answer the questions that have been raised to date.

The major positive news is that the City of Burlington will be receiving a Flood Insurance Rate Reduction of 25%, effective on October 1, 2009. The rate reduction is increasing from 20-25% because almost every City department, the School District, Retirement Communities, and the Dike District are actively working on keeping Burlington prepared and involved, whether it is monitoring storm drainage facilities or making sure the emergency plan is ready to implement. THANK YOU for participating!!!

As of September, it appears that the preliminary release of the long pending update of the Flood Insurance Rate Maps is still on track for this December.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency is still working on how to save the Chinook Salmon and the Orca Whale, and they expect to have Regional Guidance and a model ordinance and checklist ready for distribution in late fall or early winter.

### PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Property Protection Measures

Let's get started on improving flood protection in your home! Staff is available to provide site specific flood and flood-related data, make site visits to review flood, drainage and sewer problems and to advise and assist on retrofitting techniques.

Stop by the Permit Center or give the Building Department a call at 755-0077 and let the city provide you with technical assistance on improving flood protection in your home. A site visit will be scheduled at your convenience to put a checklist together for home flood protection improvements. Staff is also available from the Public Works Department if additional assistance is needed to assist with drainage and sewer problems.

If you want to do your own research, here are some of the recommended FEMA technical bulletins that you will find at the Burlington Public Library and the Building Department for your use:

- Homeowner's Guide to Retrofitting, FEMA-312
- Design Manual for Retrofitting Flood-prone Residential Structures, FEMA-114
- Protecting Building Utilities from Flood Damage, FEMA-348

Take a few minutes to look over the possible areas where you may need to floodproof important parts of your home. A good example is protecting utility systems. This is one of the easiest and least expensive retrofitting methods to accomplish. Whether it is elevating, relocating, or anchoring; items such as electrical panel boxes, furnaces, water heaters, washers/dryers and heating fuel tanks are typically very cost effective items to upgrade. There are also recommendations for drainage and crawl space improvements.

If you have a newer (post 1985) home, check to be sure these items have been taken care of when the home was constructed. Identify the potential for moving essential items and furniture to upper floors or the attic of your home. Materials like sandbags, plywood, plastic sheeting, and lumber handy for emergency waterproofing can already be on hand. This action will help minimize the amount of damage caused by floodwaters and requires minimal storage space.

## Flood Safety & Disaster Preparedness

Every home needs to **be prepared and STAY PREPARED!** Review your Flood procedure at home with your household and take the time to put your Emergency Preparedness Kit together, or check your flashlight batteries in your existing kit. Remember, a supply of drinking water, emergency food and first aid kit are the bare minimums, along with flashlights. In addition to the basic three day supply of food and water, consider having supplies for sheltering for up to two weeks. Keep a small "grab and go" kit for your place of work with food, water, first aid supplies. For the emergency kit in the car, add flares, jumper cables and seasonal supplies.

There is an excellent FEMA publication entitled "Are You Ready? An In-depth Guide to Citizen Preparedness" available. This publication offers disaster information for natural hazards, technological hazards and terrorism. It will guide you for preparation in advance and recovery from a disaster. If you want to order a free copy for your home, call 1-800-480-2520. On the internet, <http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/> is the website link. A copy is available in the Burlington Public Library. THIS COVERS THE BASIC DISASTER SUPPLIES KIT IN DETAIL.

**Earthquakes are an example of a disaster that cannot be predicted and that is not seasonal. Be prepared at all times!**

## Flood Insurance

Any property owner in the City of Burlington is eligible to obtain Flood Hazard Insurance, since the city participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. Purchasing or refinancing a home will trigger a requirement for flood insurance by the lender. Coverage in the event of flooding is not included in typical homeowner's insurance policies. Flood insurance is available through your own agency or broker and includes flooding from ponding/drainage problems, snowmelt flooding, runoff on hillsides, or any flooding involving surface water. Contents of the building are a separate addition to the policy. There is limited coverage available for flood-related erosion and mudslide. Replacement cost coverage is available for principal residences. *Concerned about high Flood Insurance Rates?* You may qualify for a substantial reduction if you have an Elevation Certificate that shows your home or business is located at or above the 100 year flood elevation. You will have to retain the services of a Licensed Engineer to complete the paperwork, unless an Elevation Certificate is on file already with the Building Department, so please check here first.

If you are concerned that your flood insurance rates are increasing, contact the Building Department and review your Elevation Certificate to make sure that all the information is correct.

**Lowering flood insurance premiums: elevate, elevate, elevate... Not only should the low floor be elevated but make sure that the floor of the crawlspace meets Technical Bulletin 11-01. Flood insurance rates are higher for buildings with crawl spaces that are two feet or more below the lowest adjacent exterior grade. Also make sure that all mechanical equipment is elevated above the BFE. This includes ductwork, heat pumps, furnaces, and propane tanks or oil tanks. Make sure any garages that have the floor below BFE are also vented along with the crawlspace.**

## Flood Warning System

Each and every citizen has a role to play in the event of a flood. **BE PREPARED!!!** The Burlington Flood Emergency Team prepares and coordinates activities needed to be ready for any flood event with the involvement of all the responsible agencies. A new siren system is in the works that will have several locations for better coverage; meanwhile the existing siren is ready if needed.

The procedure for warning the public is coordinated through the Skagit County Department of Emergency Management. The Emergency Alert System is activated when necessary and includes the following local radio stations:

**KBRC 1430 AM ▪ KWLE 1340 AM ▪  
KAPS 660 AM**

If evacuation is necessary, there will also be door-to-door notification and loudspeakers broadcasting from public safety vehicles in the neighborhood. Flaggers will be stationed at key intersections along the Evacuation Route to direct traffic.

Today, there are three neighborhoods in the Neighbor-to-Neighbor notification plan for very early warning. Contact your neighbors to ask if they want to be part of taking responsibility for each other, through a simple Telephone Tree, and call the Planning Department to get on the list. Now is the perfect time to identify your block captains and work together to **BE PREPARED**. Meetings are now being scheduled for the upcoming Flood Season.

## Natural & Beneficial Functions of Floodplains

Filling property to increase elevation in the floodplain is allowed today, but the long term goal is to minimize fill to protect fish and wildlife habitat. Burlington supports habitat improvements in the floodplain, and the Gages Slough restoration projects are a major effort in the city. Storm water quality monitoring in Burlington clearly shows that better water quality treatment systems are needed and this is a major focus of the surface water utility. The focus on the environment will continue to grow as FEMA implements a response to a Biological Opinion about the harm being done to Endangered Species because of the FEMA floodplain regulations, including Chinook Salmon and Orca Whales.

The Gages Slough habitat management plan has identified locations for restoration and water quality improvement projects, so mitigation projects will be ready to build when the opportunity arises. Wetland buffer restoration and maintenance projects are in process to improve habitat and several more are in the planning stages. Improving public access to habitat areas is another important goal for the program. Urban areas are unique because it is not simple to protect the public and at the same time, restore the environment; this is one of many challenges today and in the future.

Protecting agricultural lands is part of protecting the Natural and Beneficial Functions of Floodplains. The city is working towards implementing the Burlington Agricultural Heritage Credit program which will raise funds for farmland preservation in exchange for increased residential density in Downtown and the Retail Core. An area of 5,628 acres has been identified as the target area for purchase of development rights.

Key elements of the Skagit County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan include giving the Skagit River more room by setting the dikes back in Burlington and looking at a variety of measures through the delta area to the mouth of the Skagit River, carefully coordinating and managing the hydroelectric power dams in the river system during a flood event, permanently moving homes and development rights out of the floodway, improving the environment for wildlife, and creating new public access opportunities to improve everyone's quality of life.

## Local Flood Hazard Areas

There are three flood zones in the City Limits of Burlington, the Floodway (river side of the dike), the 100 Year Flood Zone and the Special Flood Risk Zone. Most of Burlington is in the 100 Year Flood Zone.

The Special Flood Risk Zone includes all land within 300 feet of the landward toe of the Dike. All structures must be designed so that floodwaters can pass underneath and there is no occupied space below one foot above the 100 year flood elevation, unless the site is within 100 feet of the Dike where nothing can be built. All property in Gages Slough that is three feet or more below the 100 year flood elevation was designated as Special Flood Risk in the mid-1980's as part of a negotiating process over the uniquely complex Skagit River delta area when the Flood Insurance Rate Maps were finalized. The status of Gages Slough will be revisited when new base flood elevation maps are released by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Burlington and Dike District #12 are implementing an Interlocal Agreement to move ahead with plans for Levee Certification, to get 100-year flood protection for Burlington. Engineering analysis is being done systematically to document the levee design. The levee enlargement work started in 1990 and earthwork is still underway. Land acquisition and environmental review are also moving ahead for setting the levees back through the three-bridge corridor (Railroad bridge, Old 99 bridge, and Interstate 5 bridge) to protect the urban areas of Burlington and Mount Vernon in a 100-year flood event.

## Map Determination & Library Information

A map determination is figuring out where the 100 year flood elevation is located relative to the first occupied floor of your home or business. This information is used to prepare an Elevation Certificate. A citywide system of elevation benchmarks is maintained in the Building Department. An average of an additional \$200 in savings is possible on your flood insurance policy if you have an elevation certificate, in addition to the 25% rate reduction available in Burlington on October 1, 2009, as a result of community participation in the federal Community Rating System program. There are issues with flood insurance providers, and if you feel that you are not getting good information, please contact the city and we will try to help.

Information on other flood improvements, such as elevating your building, filling the crawl space, or floodproofing the lower portion, is available from the City and in the Burlington Public Library. There is a flood reference area in the library and staff will assist in directing you to the information you need.

Every land use newsletter includes a flood and natural hazard mitigation topic. Call the Planning Department at 755-9717 to get on the mailing list! Take the time to participate because your ideas will be taken seriously and you will have a say in the future of your community.

## Substantial Improvement/Damage Requirements

The National Flood Insurance Program requires that if the cost of reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, or other improvements to a building equals or exceeds 50% of the building's market value, then the building must meet the construction requirements for a new building. Substantially damaged buildings must also be brought up to the same standard. The major issue is elevating the structure one foot above the 100 year flood elevation, along with all mechanical equipment, ductwork and electrical equipment, and installing properly located and sized vents. However, if you are located in the Gages Slough Special Flood Risk Zone, "breakaway walls" are required below the 100 year flood elevation, and they must be designed by a licensed structural engineer.

**DO NOT DRIVE THROUGH  
FLOODED AREAS!**

## Drainage System Maintenance

This is the sixth year of water quality studies in Gages Slough and wetland restoration projects to improve water quality are a high priority. The commitment to long term maintenance, monitoring and habitat improvement is beginning to show, with the success of the first two wetland restoration projects that are beginning to mature. Clean water, efficient flow of water when needed, and a quality environment are the goals. Gages Slough and the Skagit River are important amenities for the community. Burlington is fortunate to have the Skagit Conservation District as a partner in Gages Slough water quality sampling.

The drainage maintenance and inspection program is part of flood hazard mitigation. Every year, all detention ponds, pipes, catch basins and other drainage control structures are inspected and corrections required as needed to ensure that the capacity of the ponds is maintained and that the ability of the system to clean the storm water is retained, in addition to inspection and maintenance of the city street system. The public drainage system, including culverts, pipes and ditches is well maintained. Gages Slough is maintained at each street intersection and culvert location. A well maintained drainage system that functions in small storms will provide the best assistance possible in large storms and floods, by quickly and efficiently carrying the excess water out of town.

*Thank you for respecting the signs that state **"No Dumping – thank you"** at public access points to Gages Slough! Each property owner along the Slough is responsible for cleaning up any litter or trash that is on their property. The problem of illegal dumping of yard waste in Gages Slough and the problem of trash dumped at points of public access to the River can only be solved if everyone helps out. It is illegal to dump or to fill along Gages Slough or the Skagit River. You may report illegal dumping (this includes yard waste) in the Slough, by calling the Code Enforcement Officer at either 755-9717 or 755-2307, or in writing.*

## Floodplain Development Permit Requirements

Before you build, add fill, or make changes to your property and structures, be sure to contact the Planning and Building Departments to determine if any permits or approvals are necessary. The Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Insurance Industry make frequent changes in the interpretation of floodplain standards, and you need to be sure you are using the most current information for any construction project.